

Kaiser, Sven-Erik

From: Kaiser, Sven-Erik
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2013 5:00 PM
To: Chun, Dave
Subject: Cong. Gabbard Inquiry on Pesticides and Worker Protection Standards

Dave,

This responds to your inquiry on pesticides and worker protection standards. Please take a look and let me know if any additional questions. Thanks,
Sven

Q1. The Worker Protection Standard for Agriculture Pesticides regulations established by the Environmental Protection Agency has not been updated or revised for more than 20 years.

Response: The 1992 revisions to the regulation at 40 CFR part 170 comprised a significant change to the then existing requirements to protect workers. Since 1992, there have been four, relatively minor substantive amendments to the regulation, listed here:

May 1995

- Exemptions for qualified crop advisors from some requirements (60 FR 21952 and 60 FR 21954)
- Early entry into a treated area is allowed for workers to perform irrigation and limited contact tasks (73 FR 75598)

June 1996

- Establishes the length of time for which decontamination supplies are required following the expiration of pesticide restricted-entry intervals (REIs) of 4 hours or less (61 FR 33207, 61 FR 33212 and 61 FR 33213)

October 1997

- Permitted early entry for workers for hand harvesters of greenhouse grown cut-roses (62 FR 52003)

September 2004

- Amendment to permit optional use of separable glove liners beneath chemical-resistant gloves. (69 FR 533461)

Q2. The Federal government estimates that there are 10,000-20,000 acute pesticide poisonings annually among workers in the agriculture industry.

Response: The estimate of 10 – 20,000 acute agricultural worker incidents was made at the time of the original WPS rulemaking in 1992. Since then, revisions to product labels and the implementation of the WPS have reduced those numbers; however, despite these protections, avoidable incidents continue to occur. The EPA estimates that there are about 2,800 acute pesticide poisoning incidents in the agricultural worker community every year that could be avoided if protections were strengthened.

Q3. Cumulative long-term exposure (of pesticides) can increase the risk for farm workers, their families and their children for serious chronic health problems such as cancer, birth defects, neurological impairments, and Parkinson's disease.

Response: The EPA notes that the peer-reviewed literature provides well-documented associations between chronic exposure to pesticides and cancers, neurological disorders, and respiratory problems evidencing later in life. It is expected that farmworkers, through their work in pesticide treated areas, and their families, from

exposure through drift, contact with the contaminated clothing worn by workers, and by living in proximity to treated areas, may experience chronic exposures that could lead to chronic illnesses.

Sven-Erik Kaiser
U.S. EPA
Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (1305A)
Washington, DC 20460
202-566-2753

From: Chun, Dave [mailto:Dave.Chun@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Friday, November 08, 2013 10:15 AM
To: Kaiser, Sven-Erik
Subject: Request for Assistance

Good morning Sven,

The Congresswoman would like to verify if the following statements are factual.

1. The Worker Protection Standard for Agriculture Pesticides regulations established by the Environmental Protection Agency has not been updated or revised for more than 20 years.
2. The Federal government estimates that there are 10,000-20,000 acute pesticide poisonings annually among workers in the agriculture industry.
3. Cumulative long-term exposure (of pesticides) can increase the risk for farm workers, their families and their children for serious chronic health problems such as cancer, birth defects, neurological impairments, and Parkinson's disease.

Also, would you know how long it might take to receive a response, which can be emailed directly to me. Thank you for your assistance on this matter.

Dave
202-226-1205
Dave.chun@mail.house.gov

David K. Chun
Legislative Assistant
Office of Rep. Tulsi Gabbard
502 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202 225-4906
202 225-4987 (Fax)
<http://gabbard.house.gov>



Keep up with Hawaii's Second Congressional District and Rep. Tulsi Gabbard. Click [here](#) to receive T-Mail.